The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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ANNUAL REPORT OF SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

It is the privilege of the secretary of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to submit her annual report for the year 1929–1930. During this time she has attended and kept the minutes of the eight regular meetings of the Exchange. She attended the annual meeting, at which she read her annual report. She has sent monthly notices of meetings to Branch chairmen, able to attend them. She has sent requests for annual reports to all chairmen listed in the "Manual." Beginning with November, a limited number of copies of her monthly reports have been sent to distant members of the Central Committee and to chairmen who are never able to attend the Boston meetings. The interest and increased work stimulated by this have repaid many times the extra expense and effort. She here requests that any persons desiring to receive such reports now and then next year notify her. She has attended to all correspondence incident to her office.

The Exchange has held meetings on the first Friday morning of each month, from October to May inclusive, at 25 Beacon Street, Boston. The chairman, Mrs. Harry A. Stevens, has presided at seven of these. In her absence in the South for a needed rest, Miss Edith L. Jones took her place at the April meeting. Mrs. Stevens' practical knowledge of the work and her great interest in it make her an ideal organizing and presiding officer.

The average attendance at these meetings has been forty-eight with an average of thirty-four Branches represented. Waltham again holds the record for the greatest total number of members present. Forty-three Branches have been represented at least once. Attendance at one of these meetings is almost certain to produce fruitful interest. Why do not more people make them excuses for delightful trips to Boston? A visit to the Association's beautiful building is always an inspiration to good Unitarians, while contact with other Cheerful Letter workers gives opportunity for helpful exchange of ideas about methods and discussion of problems.

During the year two faithful Branch chairmen, Mrs. Eva L. Paul of Hartford, Conn., and Mrs. J. L. Smith of Barre, Mass., have been called home. Their names are held in grateful memory.

It is gratifying to be able to report that through the efforts of the Exchange the name of Lillian Freeman Clarke, its faithful friend from its beginnings, has been placed "in honorem" in the Founders' Fund. Every issue of the magazine carries in its heading the following apt quotation from her father, "Every place a church; every day the Lord's day; all events blessings; all joy thanksgiving; and all nature and life full of God."

Various members of the Central Committee have spoken before Alliance Branches to explain the meaning of Cheerful Letter work and to offer practical suggestions for its pursuance. Whenever possible they are glad to do this. Chairmen of Branch program committees, who wish to plan for a "Cheerful Letter Day," are advised to arrange for their speaker early.

A new, active worker, Mrs. John A. McCaddin, chairman of the Book and Magazine Club, has been added to the ranks. Hers is the task of editing the column of appeals in the magazine. As it is her policy to allow no new name, which is not properly vouched for, to appear in print, it becomes her duty to obtain and to pass upon references, which are procured in most cases from the applicant's clergyman. In her annual report she says, "In most instances, the minister writes to this effect, 'Yes, she is a worthy woman and will make good use of the reading sent her.' Now and then I am told, 'You had better not send her anything; I *know* her.' After a satisfying reply the letter of the applicant is printed in the magazine. To date I have printed seventy-seven from new members and one hundred and forty-eight from worthy old ones.

"Extremely interesting appeals, like one which began, 'Please give me a wealthy correspondent, someone who doesn't have to worry where the next pair of stockings is coming from or how the taxes are to be paid,' and which do not include any hint of begging are sent to some Branch chairman, who in turn assigns them to a member of her Branch. In attempting to fit the correspondent to the worker, who will write to her, I have assigned 82 correspondents to 35 different Branches. I still have more to be given out."

Another important, time-consuming phase of Mrs. McCaddin's work is the bringing of the card catalogue of correspondents up to date. This supposedly contains a card, giving the name and address of each distant correspondent with the names of the Branches, which regularly send articles or write to her, and the dates of the years, when this correspondence is active. Continual vigilance is necessary to keep these addresses correct. As one Southern friend wrote, "I don't move because I want to, but poor folks, who live on rented land, have to be always changing."

Mrs. McCaddin's annual report continues, "I want to thank chairmen for their very wonderful coöperation, without which I could have done little. From one I receive almost monthly reports as to changes of addresses, etc. My files could be kept much more accurately if you all sent me such monthly reports. I want also to thank workers for their generous willingness to take the Christmas requests.

"I am thankful to say that the type of letters received recently are of a distinctly higher grade than at first. I have had scarcely any letters lately asking for clothing; partly because I at first so sternly denied them. I certainly have enjoyed the work and should like personally to take every applicant as a regular correspondent of my own. This is, of course, impossible, as I realize the number of hours each day and even into the night, which I now spend at my desk."

Mrs. McCaddin's enthusiasm, which involves such effort and produces such results, is truly refreshing. May your secretary suggest that you show your tangible appreciation of it by promptly reporting to her all changes of address; also definite needs of your correspondents, as well as the names of all who break the rules and beg for material aid.

One of the educational ventures of the Exchange is carried on by its Home Study Committee, of which Mrs. George A. Sands is the efficient chairman. Here follow excerpts from her annual report:

"Our pupils, who at the present time number one hundred and one, include thirty teachers of whom two are men, thirty-two boys and girls, nineteen mothers, four other men and sixteen children. Of the teachers nine are takin correspondence courses, eleven are receivin weekly articles from the *Literary Digest* togethe with a list of questions, and the rest are takin reading courses including History, Englis Literature and the Modern Novel. Many of th books used in these courses are loaned and th Committee is greatly indebted to a Beverly fam ily for the use of them. The most popula courses for the young people are English, Histor and Geography. These three are often com bined in one lesson. The response of Alliance has been very generous this year and we hav never before been so well supplied with goo textbooks.

"One method used in the teaching of Englis is to supply the pupil with an interesting, stand ard book, together with a list of questions, whic cannot possibly be answered by one who ha not read the book, and which must be an swered before another book is sent. The tend ency of certain students to use books for ligh reading instead of serious study is thus checked Ten of the mothers, who receive packages o Angelo Patri's articles and other helpful materia each month, are doing supervised reading.

"Fifty Alliances have reported Home Stud work done this year. Thirteen hundred an twenty-two books have been contributed, a increase of 15 per cent over last year. Th number of magazines used runs well into th thousands, and your chairman would not dar tell of the number of clippings utilized. On Alliance alone collects yearly from three to fou thousand articles all arranged in perfect order A little Ipswich lady, eighty-nine years old, ha aided greatly by preparing articles and picture and by collecting educational material fo children.

"Frequently requests like the following com to the Department: 'Can you send me a pictur of the laying of the Atlantic cable to illustrat my essay?' writes a high school boy. 'I hav to prepare something about Dr. Stresema Can you send me some material?' asks a hig school girl. 'I need something to illustrat History note books,' writes a teacher.

"This year $73.25 in money has been co tributed by 33 Alliances and six friends. C this $2 was given and spent for *The Primar Educator Magazine*, $12 for Christmas work $5 for material such as paper, mucilage, etc $46 for postage, leaving a balance of $8.2 This money has enabled us to accept necessar books, which often would never have been give if the donor had had to pay for their sendin It is hoped that next year sufficient will b given so that crayons and more materials f work with children may be purchased.

"The Committee finds many problems t solve. A family in Virginia, so far back in th

country that none of the children can attend school, has a deaf and dumb child. We are trying to help the afflicted child and to work with the others. It is hoped that by another year data may be available so that we shall know what each State is doing for its handicapped children.

"At Christmas time 150 books were sent to individuals, either pupils or children in their families. The chairman had been collecting these books all through the summer and fall. Many of them were sent directly by members of Alliances. Eight of our pupils have been especially commended by their teachers.

"The chairman wishes to thank all who have helped in this work. It has not seemed fair to mention any one person or group. Some have given time; some materials; some money. Much valuable work has been done by chairmen in small groups, where little money is available. It is because of the coöperation of you all that this work is possible; you may well congratulate yourselves on the accomplishments of the past year."

Sometimes a seed falls upon fertile soil, sprouts, grows and flourishes. Such a seed was the suggestion made by the secretary in her last annual report that Branches include in their budgets small donations toward the expenses of the Home Study Department. The contributions mentioned in the above report show the generosity of numerous Branches and also their belief that the work is vital and worth while. Will not more people help in the same way next year, so that Mrs. Sand's dream of adequate equipment for the teaching of the small children may become a reality? Her hope for duplicate textbooks for far separated teachers and pupils has been partially realized this year; why not make possible its complete fulfillment next year?

Another Committee of which the Exchange may be justly proud is the Library Committee, under the direction of another efficient and hard-working chairman, Mrs. Henry R. Bowser. Parts of her inspiring annual report follow: "I feel much gratified by the success of the Library Department during the past year and I wish to thank all Branch chairmen for their friendly co-operation. After all, the work is theirs and upon them depends entirely its success. I can but plan it, arrange for the distribution and attempt to be a walking encyclopedia of information. It is a pleasure to carry on a work when one meets with cheerful and willing support on all sides.

"Your other departments have to do with the solace and cheer of individuals. The Library Department is an educational factor of wide-spreading influence and of no small importance. As most of its books are sent to school libraries, where, but for the Cheerful Letter, these facilities would be either non-existent or limited, we may feel of real importance in the development of broader, more useful, more enjoyable lives of hundreds of boys and girls in rural and mountain districts. Furthermore, we help them to a better and more intelligent citizenship, which is of benefit to our country and, indirectly, to ourselves.

"One hundred and five libraries received books from us this year. We now have our first college on our list. Some months ago the American Unitarian Association forwarded to me an appeal for books from Mt. Park Institute, in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina. This school, which has the endorsement of Ex-President Coolidge, has some three hundred students and offers college preparatory, business administration and junior college work. The eighty college students range from youth to middle age. The teachers, graduates of Harvard, Yale and other big universities almost donate their services in the cause of education. To become accredited on the list of southern colleges this Institute must have a library. We have sent them a total of 938 volumes. Four hundred and seventy-six came from Lancaster, Pa., the largest single library donated this year. Cambridge First Parish, Wayland, and some other Branches have helped here, too. The Dean writes, 'Words cannot express the appreciation that we feel for the wonderful aid you have given us in this project.'

"I am constantly impressed by the self-sacrifice shown by some of the school-teachers themselves, who give far more of themselves than their meagre salaries pay for and who even buy with their own money school necessities, which are not provided. One of our best men in Climax, Ga., who lost by fire a year ago a school library of 1,300 volumes, felt that we had done so much to help him that he could not ask for more aid. I learned of the fire by chance and I am glad to say that 651 books have been sent him by Wellesley Hills and Hartford, Conn.

"A teacher in a pitiably poor section of Texas wrote that she had no facilities. Within a short time our Branch in San Antonio had sent books. Other Branches are interested and are going to help. I especially appreciated the way in which San Antonio answered my S.O.S. call.

"There are twenty-four new libraries this year, an increase of 42 per cent over last year; six transfers have been effected. The new libraries represent eleven schools, seven community centres in isolated towns, and six organized centres, such as a church library in Arkansas, the town library in Pincher Creek, Alberta, the Woman's Club Library in Worland, Wyo., and several seamen's societies. The Worland Library is interesting, as the president of the Club came from Brookline Second Church, which has

sent 305 books in memory of her mother. You may remember the report of last year of the generous offer of Mrs. D. Frederic Potter of Buffalo to send a memorial library of new books to be purchased for the occasion and sent to the ranch country near Watertown National Park, Alberta, Canada, where winters are so severe and roads so bad that women on the outlying ranches may not see each other for months at a time. The town has appointed a strong library board, and I understand that the library is on its way, while Cambridge First Parish has sent a generous contribution of modern fiction and the Branch of Montclair, N. J., a thirty-three-volume Encyclopedia Britannica to supplement the backbone of Mrs. Potter's carefully chosen and really valuable collection.

"I cannot enumerate the other places where our books have been placed. Serving little community centres in poverty-stricken hamlets in the mountains is far-reaching service, for thus is given to the people and especially to the children a glimpse of something beyond their own hills. A happy story or a romance, the kind of book most liked there, helps to relieve the monotony of hard lives. I am constantly amazed at the eagerness they show for books as compared to the utter indifference toward them shown by many of the workers in our cities. The desire of the parents that their children have more advantages and 'more larning' than they themselves is much to their credit and shows the good material with which we are privileged to work. As we raise the standards of their schools and lives, we must remember our own standards and not expect them to be satisfied with ancient and dilapidated books. Quality first, last and all the time must be our watch word. When quantity can be combined with quality so much the better but quality must never be sacrificed.

"There are two schools of thought, as it were, in the Library Department:—the Branches that prefer to send their books on one or several large lots and those that like a wide distribution of small packages. Both methods are useful. There are each year a small number of libraries, which need large quantities of books; there are also, and quite as important, some old friends of ours, some small communities, and some new, untried names, that require only a limited number of volumes at a time. It is less spectacular to ship many little bundles than it is to ship hundreds of books at once, but the little bundles fill as important and urgent needs. I like to try out new names with small quantities to test the reliability of the custodian.

"Thirteen libraries of 150 volumes and over have been sent this season: three by Wellesley Hills, two by Cambridge First Parish, and one each by Brookline Second Church, Buffalo, N. Y., Hartford, Conn., Lancaster, Pa., Montreal, Canada, All Souls', New York, Toledo, Ohio, and Watertown, Mass. As usual, North Carolina received the largest number of books, with Georgia second, Virginia third, Province of Alberta, Canada, fourth, Wyoming fifth, and Arkansas sixth. A total of 8,327 volumes, an increase of 26 per cent over last year, stands to our credit this year. These were sent to 105 active libraries, of which 24 are new this season. The shipping of 3,029 magazines to these libraries has been reported. Forty-one Branches have coöperated in this work, representing eleven states and two provinces of Canada. All Souls', New York, again leads the list. I must anew express my admiration for the leadership which can unite and inspire to hard work the women of a church in a great city, where the church is not the chief social centre and where distractions beckon on every side, to a degree sufficient to turn out 40,000 items of Cheerful Letter work. Very great credit is due the smaller Branches for the way in which they have carried on, often under circumstances of difficulty and discouragement. If every Alliance in the country, however small, could do its bit, however neglible it seemed to themselves, the sum total of Cheerful Letter work would be amazing. As it is, the number of Branches and the number of people engaged in the work prove that it is a very vital thing and tremendously worth while."

Your secretary feels sure that every one present, after listening to Mrs. Bowser's remarkable report, will go home with the firm intention of having a share, large or small, in the Library work next year. There really seems to be no limit to the number of books to be had, once you start to collect them. It is the fashion at the present time in many communities for people to simplify their manner of living by moving from large houses to small, convenient ones. When such a change is made, there are always many household belongings to be disposed of; among these there almost always are readable books in good condition. Don't be afraid to ask for them they will often be given to you very gladly Then, please, keep an accurate list of the number of volumes which you send, and of the libraries where you place them, and send it promptly to Mrs. Bowser. In this way she will be enabled to keep a careful list of the work accomplished and she will also be able to avoid duplication in the distribution of books.

Your secretary wishes to emphasize what the Library chairman said in regard to the condition of books sent. Volumes, weak in the bindings soiled, or badly marked, should have no place in a library. The same applies to books, published years ago, of no literary merit, which would have no appeal to your own young people. It is a waste of money to pay for the transportation

of such. They had better be sold for a few cents, which can be used for postage. As many reports stress the fact that the books given were in good condition, your secretary is certain that the number of the sort described above, which are sent, is negligible. By way of contrast, Mrs. Sands is sometimes able to use school books, which are not in the best state. Such, she feels at liberty to cut up and to send to the pupils piece meal, thus saving postage. Frequently the whole of a textbook is of no particular value to its recipient, while portions of it meet his needs exactly. Books sent directly to the students should be of the best sort.

Mrs. William B. Nichols still shows her active interest in the work of the Exchange by taking charge of the distribution of Bibles. She has placed twelve Bibles, six Testaments, and one pulpit Bible.

The work of the Exchange would be of necessity much curtailed, if it were not for the *Cheerful Letter Magazine*. Every one interested in its endeavors should subscribe to this little sheet, the official organ. For the work of many chairmen the column of appeals published each month forms the basis. The rules given under "The Book and Magazine Club" are frequently cut out and sent to importunate correspondents. The addresses of your officers printed on the last page save much time which would be spent in hunting them up. But aside from these practical features, the magazine is distinctly worth reading. It offers a variety of selections. There is always a good, undenominational sermon, a column, "With Our Home-Keepers," for the busy housewife, "A Page for Children," and, besides, much of general value, such as an article about some noted person like Emma Willard or perhaps a bit on travel. Its poetry is frequently worth learning. Not only is your magazine prized by workers but it is much enjoyed by distant friends, who cannot afford to pay its modest subscription rate of fifty cents a year. To many of these it is sent monthly; therefore money sent by Branches to be used for undesignated subscriptions is very welcome.

It, of course, follows that the magazine, which carries no advertising, cannot be self-supporting. For years the little sunshine bags have enabled the Exchange to meet the deficit for editing, printing, and mailing the pamphlets. Methods for collecting money through their aid vary in different places. Some chairmen religiously pass one at each regular Alliance meeting. Some pass a bag only once a year, having announced ahead of time that this is to be done; while some make a goodly supply of them and distribute them among members in the fall to be collected in the spring. The Hingham chairman has found a satisfactory way in distributing some twelve bags to one group at a monthly Alliance meeting and calling them in at the next meeting, when they are re-distributed to another group. Whatever method you may employ, it will be well to be even more faithful about it next year, as the following excerpt from the report of your treasurer, Miss Edith L. Jones, will show.

"During the year 59 Alliances have contributed, but, for the first time since the sunshine bags have been working we close the year with a deficit of $120.19. This amount is due for the printing bill. A gift, which has been received for many years, will not come again and was not received this year. Another contribution previously given in former years has been stopped. The balance on hand will help meet the editor's bill for the summer months. We shall need to get together with a 'long pull and a strong pull' to make up this deficit and start the year anew. My thanks are extended to all those who have contributed and for the coöperation of chairmen, which makes for success."

Your secretary feels sure that you all feel the gravity of the situation which means the necessity for inrecased effort on the part of you all. It may be that you can think up some original way to make the sunshine bags much more effective. On the other hand, there may be a possibility of procuring more subscribers in your Branch. Every new subscription which is obtained puts the magazine on a more nearly self-supporting basis. Possibly the action of a western Branch as described by its chairman may be practicable in other localities. "The Alliance of the Unitarian Church of Fort Collins, Colo., has established a fund of a definite amount to be expended in subscriptions to *The Cheerful Letter* to be sent to correspondents of its committee by its chairman. This fund is called the William Howard Taft Memorial Fund. At any rate, your secretary is convinced that you are going to make possible the continuance of your little paper in its present size.

In response to her requests sent out in April, your secretary has received annual reports from 141 Branch chairmen. To them she extends her hearty thanks for their compliance with her call. She regrets, however, that from nearly half the chairmen listed in the "Manual" have come no replies. This silent group, varying in size from year to year, are undoubtedly doing their work in their own way. Their officers and co-workers would like to learn of their activities. Your secretary sometimes fears that her tabulation of numbers of articles sent may discourage reports from tiny Branches. If this be true, she regrets it. To her mind the lone worker, who writes weekly to her chosen correspondent, deserves as much praise as the chairman from a big city church, who with a large committee to help her and a liberal appropriation accomplishes results of magnitude. Naturally the spectac-

ular, which arrests attention, must be recorded; yet it is the multiplication of small efforts, which spreads cheer in all directions.

The indefatigable chairman from All Souls' Church, New York City, still leads in the total number of articles sent, with 40,123 things to her credit, an increase of 15 per cent over last year. She has a well organized committee and in addition has herself a mathematical mind, as has your secretary, and because of her accurate system keeps account of everything dispatched. Would that more chairmen were as exact! The chairman from the Church of the Disciples, Boston, writes that "modesty seems to prevent many from keeping account of the good work done."

The following Branches are given in the order of the number of articles reported sent: Providence First, Northboro, Newton Channing, Needham, Hingham, Brookline First, and Newport.

This year the sending of 43,700 magazines has been reported. This number is far from exact. For example, the chairman from Alameda, Calif., writes that more than a quarter of a ton of magazines and papers have been distributed by her group, but none of these can be counted, of course. In this lavish distribution many near-by institutions have been remembered. The chairman from San Francisco Branch writes, "I find that there is no limit to the number of magazines that can be used by Seamen's Church Institute and the marine Hospital. The Chaplain at Alcatraz is most appreciative of the work we are doing. Many government prisoners were transferred from Leavenworth to Alcatraz, and the barracks are now full of young men, who need good reading matter." She has also sent magazines to be distributed by the postmaster of Kingston, San Bernardino County, and describes the place as "a little desert town made up of ex-service men, mostly gassed during the war, and their families. Many of these families never enter a church, because there is none. The postmaster is kind to them, giving them part of his one-room house for a school room. He is now asking for help to build a simple hall for a meeting place. Our society will help, if we can find others, who will do so, too. At present he has no room for more magazines, although they are much enjoyed." Similar appreciative letters come from all over the country. Branches near the coast are advised to look into the needs of lighthouse keepers for reading matter. Indefinite numbers of magazines are wanted in sanitariums serving tubercular patients. One at South Hanson, Mass., passes the pamphlets about among its inmates until they become too worn, when they are given to the Children's Department to be colored and cut up.

Your far-away correspondents must be nimble with their fingers, if you can judge from the fact that there have been sent to them 1,550 packages of quilt scraps, an increase of more than 100 per cent over last year. The chairman from Brattleboro, Vt., writes that "if the whole Southland is not covered with patchwork quilts, it is not the fault of our Branch." The chairman from the Cleveland, Ohio, Branch reports that the packages of pieces, which she sends out, "always contain black and white thread and occasionally embroidery silk. . . . A package of silk pieces was sent to the Cleveland Home for Aged Colored Women, from which they were able to realize a nice sum by making them up into cushions and selling them."

If there is any one time when Cheerful Letter workers allow themselves free rein, it is at Christmas. The joy which this year's 1,000 boxes, an increase of 37 per cent over last year, carried to some 10,000 individuals, mostly children, cannot be measured. Times have been harder than usual for your correspondents; flood, drought and tornado have exacted their tolls, to say nothing of the boll weevil and the fruit fly. Unemployment has made much suffering. Very little money was available for the use of Santa Claus. Many a chairman has reported sending gifts to families that otherwise would have had none. The generosity of Cheerful Letter workers made possible the erection of many trees, which brought happiness to schools and to whole communities. Three expressions of appreciation taken from reports at random follow. A mother wrote to the Marlboro chairman, "You ought to have seen my poor kids, when they saw the candy. They most had a fit." Brookline Second chairman helped a family, expecting no Christmas, to a happy one. The mother wrote, "when daddy came in, we opened the package. He said, 'Well, you ought to be good children to have such a nice package from Boston.'" To the chairman of the committee of the Church of the Saviour, Brooklyn, came this word from Hilda Rose, "Christmas is a wonderful moment in life, and to exiles it means so much more. . . . I wonder if you enjoyed packing the Christmas box as much as we enjoyed unpacking it. Every gift was a delight and instantly appreciated. . . . We lit the candles to make it Christmasy and ate the delicious candy. The two, big, cozy cats enjoyed their catnip and the ball. . . . I shall read 'The Bonny Briar Bush' aloud to Karl and Daddy, I am always so glad to get a good book to read to them."

The appreciation of correspondents often comes in tangible form at Christmas time. Southern greens and chestnuts wend their way north, as do bits of needle work. The chairman of Dorchester First reports that "One member of our committee received a rather unusual gift in the shape of a large box of pork products, made from the pig, 'whose growth and well-being had

loomed large in the chatty letters from its owner.'"

Rev. Mrs. Budlong, field secretary of the General Alliance, recently attended a conference of the Cheerful Letter Exchange. After listening to reports, she remarked that she was frequently astonished to find the Exchange much bigger than its name. Your secretary cites a few incidents to show how far-reaching are the efforts of individual Branches; at the same time she calls attention to the fact that, had it not been for the medium of "Cheerful Letter," the people needing help would never have been discovered. The Alliance of Syracuse, N. Y., has long been interested in a young woman, who teaches school in the Virginia mountains. Only by perseverance and real effort did she raise herself above the level of a sordid and poverty-stricken environment and acquire enough education to enable her to procure a school. Her interest in her pupils has always been sympathetic and genuine. At present the State of Virginia is attempting needed reforms in its educational standards, and this valuable teacher will be debarred from a position in its schools, unless she studies to procure one of the new certificates. An invalid father and a hoard of brothers and sisters have always made heavy demands upon her meagre salary. Money for the necessary course seemed as unattainable as the rainbow. She must have believed that fairy godmothers still exist, when she learned that a generous member of Syracuse Alliance through the channels of its Cheerful Letter committee was volunteering to give her a full twelve months' course of four terms at Virginia Teachers' College. Other members of the Branch are raising a fund for incidentals, while Massachusetts Branches are planning material aid. Who can measure the influence which this young woman, soon to become versed in up-to-date methods of teaching, will exercise upon the boys and girls of that isolated community?

Your secretary is convinced that one of the most far-reaching ways for an individual to work is through a school-teacher. The following is but one of many cases. A member of the Middleboro Evening Alliance, who is a teacher in Bridgewater Normal School, has chosen for her correspondent a teacher in a North Carolina mountain school. To her is frequently sent aid in the form of books and other school supplies, but of even more value must be the friendly advice, which goes with them.

Through the efforts of the chairman of the Exchange and her friends a young girl of considerable promise, who had so injured her knee that she could not walk the long way from her home to Blue Ridge Mission School, was given several months in one of its dormitories, this winter. This surely is another example of a helping hand extended in a time of need.

Another outstanding piece of work has been done by the Wellesley Hills group. For their correspondents they adopted a worthy family in Iowa that had fallen upon hard times. The mother, who had had a leg amputated, was unable to keep up the payments on an artificial one and so was driven to hobbling about on a makeshift, whittled out of an old chair by her husband. The Wellesley Hills Committee promptly raised money for a suitable limb for her. They sent a wonderful box at Christmas to the whole family, all the members of which sent their thanks in the form of a carefully ironed sheet of white paper, upon which by the side of a beautifully mounted, pressed flower, each down to the five-year-old wrote his personal thanks.

Waltham Branch has, through the generosity of a friend, acquired a new up-to-date wheel chair, which it loans without pay to needy people requiring one. The old one, through the offices of the Morgan Memorial, has been "given to a bedridden invalid, living in a basement room. A neighbor helped her into the chair and wheeled her to the window, and for the first time in three years she was able to see beyond the four walls of her room."

No discussion of the work of the Cheerful Letter Exchange is complete, if it does not touch upon the problems of the workers. All through the year the secretary receives letters, asking her advice as to the best methods to be pursued. After reading the reports of the Branch chairmen, she wonders that she has had the temerity to reply at all, so varied are their ways. It is really always a case of fitting the methods to the locality. The following schemes culled from reports, showing creditable amounts of work accomplished, may be of interest. From Berkeley, Calif., comes the information that there is at present only one person on the committee; the Reading chairman writes that she is the "whole committee"; while in contrast Middleboro boasts of fourteen on its committee. Newton Centre chairman says, "We are not able to work as a committee, but do enjoy serving each in her own way." Providence First Congregational's chairman reports "fifteen meetings held the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month, with the exception of November, and two extra meetings in April each with box lunch. One final afternoon meeting was held in April for letters and reports with six guests. An ice cream tea . . . with a social hour following was given."

Boston First Church has 25 regular correspondents, "who vary in age from 12 to 80 and include 3 men and 2 boys." The workers of the new, enthusiastic Branch of Harrisburg, Pa., took to one of their regular meetings "such things as seemed to be especially desired according to the 'appeals' in the Magazine." The chairman had with her three copies of the periodical and

from them were selected the names of people, who seemed to want what had been brought. The articles were attractively wrapped and sent. Numerous other groups have no regular correspondents.

The Sandwich chairman regrets that she has received fewer replies than ever from the people to whom she has sent cheer. On the other hand, the chairman of Dorchester Channing Branch, a lone worker, who has sent 1,390 items herself, has received a record number of 151 letters. She writes, "As I always send stamps in all my packages and letters, except on the Christmas cards . . ., I find that I have used 235 stamps." The only suggestion that your secretary has to make in regard to the unacknowledged letter or parcel is that you always enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope and that you be forbearing if the reply is rather long delayed. So many things are likely to interfere with the writing of a letter, which is in itself a real task, that you ought to be somewhat charitable about it. On the other hand, a person who can always find time to write to ask for things and who can rarely manage to acknowledge them, is not desirable and had better be given up in favor of one who feels some obligation.

The person who asks for aid is still with you; perhaps because of harder times in a greater number than usual. The same mail brought your secretary the information from Erie, Pa., that "it is hard for my people to understand that the Cheerful Letter is not a charitable society," and from Lancaster, Pa., "it has been a pleasure to meet these unknown friends and share their joys and sorrows." Toledo's chairman writes, "I have discovered that the thing our correspondents want more than anything is a continued personal contact with women outside. Their need seems to be not so much material as spiritual and an occasional 'cheerful letter' affords an exhilarating stimulus which helps them recognize their own opportunities and perhaps gives them a bigger conception of all that is beautiful about them." Your secretary is certain that there is only one way to deal with the person who breaks the rule: namely, to warn her once, and if she again transgresses to drop her from your list. It isn't that these people do not need your largess; it is that you break a rule of the Exchange every time you extend it in the form of clothes or money. As many chairmen report, there are numberless persons yearning for what you may legitimately give them. Spend a little time and care and you will find them.

Was there ever a Cheerful Letter chairman with money enough to accomplish all that her altruistic self wished to do? Your secretary doubts it! The two hundred and fifty dollars allotted the committee of a city church near Boston probably looks as inadequate as does the two dollar appropriation from a struggling country Alliance. The more money available, the broader the vision of the worker, and before the end of the year each has probably had occasion to open her own pocketbook. Some committees do augment the amount at their disposal by concerted action. Frequent have been bridge parties, food sales, and silver teas for the benefit of the Cheerful Letter. Dedham's chairman has found the Public Library willing to pay a modest sum for certain books in good condition, which they did not possess and which were too erudite for her correspondents. The Leominster chairman netted a satisfactory amount from the sale of old paper. Getting subscriptions for magazines has helped several. Here again the method must be suited to the community.

It is encouraging to note the tendency for others than Alliance members to help in this work. The chairman for Barnstable reports, "As usual, we have had the hearty coöperation of other churches in our village and of our summer members." The chairman from Northboro writes, "I should at times be discouraged, were it not for the helping hands of friends in all denominations." From Milwaukee comes the information that "We had some picture books and paper dolls donated by some of our Sunday School children, also some beautiful scrap books, which they took great pleasure in making us." In many reports the help given by young people is stressed, which your secretary considers an encouraging sign.

That Cheerful Letter work brings satisfaction to workers and recipients alike is evidenced by the following excerpts taken from annual reports. From Montclair, N. J., comes the word that "In return we have received hundreds of letters, often illiterate and pathetic, in many cases amusing, but all so grateful for a bit of attention, a word of cheer and comfort, a book to 'help to pass the weary hours away,' as they express it." From West Newton it is learned that "the letters that we received after Christmas made us feel that we had received more than we gave." The chairman from Newport, R. I., reports that to know "that we have been able to bring a word of cheer and comfort the lonely, and send a message to the sick and suffering is gratifying, as we are carrying out the object of the Cheerful Letter Exchange." She further writes that "One who has been helped along a dreary way writes, 'All the books we ever had in our home when I was a child were given us by the Cheerful Letter. They were always *clean* books, so my mother gave me full range of the little bookcase. Books were my friends, and they seemed so real to me!'" The Roxbury chairman testifies that "there is wonderful interest and coöperation in this work in our Alliance." The chairman for the Evening Al

liance for the Second Church in Salem adds her mite in this form, "The work has been a great interest and joy to us, and we shall be glad to do more of it in the future." The chairman from Peterboro, N. H., echoes this thought in this wise, "Our Alliance is much interested and we shall carry on the good work in the future."

In closing may the secretary leave with you a thought, expressed in a quotation, used by your chairman during the devotional exercises, conducted at one of the regular meetings of the Exchange.

"This learned I from the shadow of a tree,
That to and from did sway upon a wall:
Our shadow selves (our influence) may fall,
Where we ourselves may never be."

Respectfully submitted,
ETHEL LANE HERSEY,
Secretary.

"GOOD HEALTH" NOTES

THE Health Essay annual prize of the Gorgos Memorial has been allotted to Miss Pauline Lodge, High School Senior of Lakewood, Ohio, out of 5,000 submitted by students throughout the United States. It is the gift of Charles R. Walgreen, the subject being the relation of the Memorial "to personal health and the periodic health examination."

The amount was $500, and $250 was also given toward expenses to Washington to receive it in five one hundred dollar bills from the hands of President Hoover, the Honorary President of the Gorgos Memorial Institute, on the lawn of the White House.

The second prize of $250, was won by Canascia Duncan, of Omaha, and the third, amounting to $100, went to William Lennon, of Willimantic, Conn. Honorable mention was accorded to Helen Dale of Point Loma, Calif., and Owen E. Duffy of Miami, Fla.

Each competing State gave a $20 prize to the winner among its own high school pupils, and every school joining the contest presented a bronze medal to its best essay writer.

* * *

DENTISTS PREDICT SHRINKAGE OF JAW

At the recent convention of the New York State Dental Society, Dr. Franklin A. Squires explained that food tendencies deprive the body of necessary bone-building materials, calcium (lime) and phosphorus. He stated that 80 per cent of the population now have faulty mouth and teeth development.

Indulgence in starchy foods, such as potatoes and white bread at the expense of vegetables and fresh fruit, "deprive the blood of vital mineral elements. Children are seriously handicapped by poor jaw construction, due to "malnutrition and bad habits of living."

"The foods most of us are eating today are robbing our systems of just what we need most. As a result the human mechanism is gradually having more difficulty in maintaining the proper chemical balance in the blood stream. If Americans continue to eat starchy foods without balancing their diet properly with foods of sufficient mineral content there will be a tendency for the bone structure of the jaws to become smaller."

* * *

TRAINING FOR MODERN NURSEMAIDS

We note with satisfaction the plan of Mrs. Miriam Finn Scott of New York, child guidance specialist for fourteen years, to open classes for the preparation of nursemaids for intelligent treatment of their charges. She has found that the things that cause children to develop unsocial characteristics and undesirable tendencies are usually traceable to home environment. If persons nearest to the child understand its "point of view" and have a sympathetic appreciation of its mental and emotional "reactions," most of the complexities causing tantrums, unresponsiveness, vanity, etc., could be avoided. "When a child does not want to eat, objects to being dressed, is untidy, forgetful or disobedient, the nurse should have sufficient knowledge of basic human psychology to be capable of handling each mood in a scientifically intelligent way."

Classes are to be conducted over a period of three to six months, so that those in service may attend. They will be held at the Children's Garden, 125 East 57th Street, New York City. Instruction in physical care of the young child will be included, but necessary social and emotional latitudes which should exist between child and nurse, and how they may be cultivated, are the chief concern.

In this Children's Garden, a playroom in the home of Mrs. Scott, nursemaids will see ideal quarters, perfect toys, games and material. In play the child reveals his traits, habits, powers of observation, concentration, memory and tactual capacity (use of hands, etc.), as well as his social habits and instincts. Watching these they may realize a child's needs and how to meet them and learn the significance of play in the training of children, how they *should* play, how to arrange belongings—toys, books, clothing and working material, so that the best development may be obtained for happy and successful adult life.

LAURA R. DONNELL.

NOTHING was ever put over by being put off.
A ROLLING pin gathers no dough.
SEE through a thing—then see it through.

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. J. A. McCaddin, 21 Ashfield St., Roslindale, Mass.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card asking "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. McCaddin, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send those to the Book Club to be printed here.

SPECIAL NOTICES

It will greatly aid those who are sending books, magazines, cards, and so forth, if all our correspondents who send requests for their children will take pains to mention their names and ages. Lacking such information, one is likely to make mistakes; for a boy of twelve and a girl of seven are not usually interested in the same things.

When requesting books for the first time, correspondents should always give, as reference, the name and address of their clergyman.

When correspondents move to a new address, notice should be sent either to our headquarters, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., or to those persons who have been sending books and magazines.

It is necessary to state positively that the Cheerful Letter Exchange is not a "clothing bureau" and not a "charitable" society in the usual sense of the word. We do not undertake to send correspondents money, clothing or household goods. Letters asking for that sort of assistance cannot receive attention. Letters not signed cannot be printed.

Many people do care for just the kind of friendly service for which we are organized. We limit our efforts to them and their wishes.

Those who enjoy receiving books and magazines are asked to remember that they, in their turn, can give much pleasure if they will take pains to write to the persons who send such reading matter. In cases where no word of response goes back—not even to say that the books or magazines were received—senders may suppose the parcels were not welcome. Let us each do our share.

APPEALS

1. Mrs. Beatrice Hart of Hemphill, W. Va., sends many thanks to the friends who have been so kind to her. She is very lonely and would like some one to send her some crochet thread and stamped pieces.

2. Mrs. Mary A. McGehee, Vulcan, Va., has a daughter who is ill. She would like a "Gregg Shorthand Speedstudy" also a "Gregg Shorthand Dictionary." She writes, "Please try to get these books for me."

3. I am writing to thank all who remembered me last Xmas and to let them know that I am in the Tuberculosis Sanatorium and wish to be remembered with reading, postage stamps, writing paper, and envelopes or anything that will help me pass my lonely hours here in bed. Will answer all who send postage as I lost my only help April 17, and have no one to look to for anything. Mrs. Ornie Tyson Davis, N. C. Sanatorium, Col. Div., Sanatorium, N. C.

4. Mrs. V. M. Swanson, Epperson, Tenn., has four children, the oldest 8 years old, the youngest 16 months. She would enjoy any kind of cheer, as she is far from any town or neighbor.

5. I am 41 years old and don't get out much. Would appreciate quilt pieces, and flower seeds and bulbs. Mrs. Julia Trail, R. 1, Box 12, Endicott, Va.

6. I would be glad to get thread, quilt pieces and magazines to read. I am taking care of my father and mother. She is helpless. I have nine children and my husband has heart trouble. Mrs. C. J. Womack, Decatur, Tenn.

7. I am writing to thank the one who is sending me the *Cheerful Letter* each month. I sure do appreciate it and I wish I knew her address so I could write and thank her. I wonder if someone who gets the *Ladies Home Journal* would send it to me each month after they are through with it. It would be so much pleasure to me and I would pass it on to others. Mrs. J. M. Adamson, R. 3, Bowdon, Ga.

8. Mrs. Dora Johnson, Ben Hur, Ark., the daughter-in-law of Rev. C. W. Johnson, would appreciate any kind of cheer. She has a fine baby girl about 2 months old. Rev. Johnson, who is 82 years old, is living with her.

9. Mrs. W. R. Huddleston, Box 118, Farmville, Va., would appreciate some quilt pieces and any kind of thread; also stockings to make rugs.

10. I like to piece quilts and sew and would appreciate hearing from anyone who would care to write and send quilt patterns. Mrs. Neoma Autry, Crabtree, Ark.

11. Mrs. Marshall Prestor, R. 2, Polkton, N. C., has two small children, both girls. Little pictures and story books for the children would be very highly appreciated.

12. Mrs. Eura Turner, R. 5, Stuart, Va., would be glad to receive any cheer that the *Cheerful Letter* friends would care to send a poor lonely widow.

13. I will be glad to hear from you all. Some reading or patch work of any kind would be welcome. Mrs. J. H. Walker, Powellton, W. Va.

14. Mrs. C. P. Ross, R. 1, Peachland, N. C., wishes to be remembered by the *Cheerful Letter* friends. There are eleven children: the baby is one year old.

15. I hope the *Cheerful Letter* friends will remember me with patch work and picture cards for my little children, ages 5, 4 and 2 years. Mrs. Roy Coppenger, R. 1, Tellico Plains, Tenn.

16. I am writing to thank you all for the nice packages of magazines and for the *Cheerful Letter*. I enjoy reading it, but miss the *Ladies Home Journal*. I hope someone will remember me with more reading. I have five girls under twelve years to care for. I hope to hear from some of the dear friends soon. Mrs. Margaret Johnson, R. D. 2, Box 83, White Top, Va.

17. Mrs. Mary Bond, R. 1, Decatur, Texas, wishes to tell the friends of her daughter Fern's graduation. She is 18 years old and has been reading the little magazine since she first learned to read. "I have been getting it for twenty years. Oh! it has been a great help and comfort to me. I have learned lots and the good sermons help me always." Mrs. Bond would be very grateful for reading for her 10-year-old boy who is in the fifth grade. Puzzles, short stories and funny things.

18. I am a lonely shut-in, cannot walk a step besides being a mother to two girls 7 years, and 13 months old. I would enjoy a bit of embroidery thread that I might embroider some and exchange it for clothing for my little ones. Mrs. Lola Eller, Grant, Va.

19. I would like to have letters of cheer, quilt scraps, or anything the kind friends care to send me, and anything in the way of pictures and story books for my children. Thanks to all who remembered me in the past. Mrs. Coleman Neaves, Crumpler, N. C.

20. It has indeed been a long while since I have heard from any of the *Cheerful Letter* people, and I would be so glad of any cheer. My husband has had chills and fever during the time the children and I had measles and my health is never good. I have four small children, two girls 8 and 6, two boys 7 and 4. Mrs. Clinton F. Porter, R. 4, Sylvester, Ga.

21. I would be glad to receive any kind of good books or magazines for my family and quilt scraps and embroidery thread for myself and daughter. I am 55 years old and have eight children, seven boys and one girl. I live off the main road and back in the mountains of Virginia near the North Carolina line. I would appreciate any kind of cheer the dear *Cheerful Letter* friends would care to send me. Mrs. R. M. Kilby, Sturgills, N. C.

22. Mrs. Ola Garrison, Ark., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Hicks of Deer, Ark., is a young widow whose husband was killed some time ago. She is now living with her parents on a small farm. She would enjoy quilt pieces, bits of thread and would love to have someone write to her.

23. Mrs. Cora Joyce, Callahan, Fla., would be so glad to correspond with some dear friend, as she lives two and one-half miles from a small town of 500 people. She has a good crowd of children to look after, from 14 years down to 18 months. Her husband who is 60 years old is very poorly. She would love some good reading for her family.

24. A dear shut-in recently sent me a copy of your splendid little publication which I so very much enjoyed. I wonder if you would allow me room to ask the readers for quilt pieces, stamps and stationery. Miss Beulah Lamb, Hazel, Ky, R. F. D. 1, Box 9.

25. Mrs. Wade Roland, Clifton, N. C., lives in the mountains of North Carolina and can't be on her feet very long at a time. She would enjoy reading matter of any kind, and some quilt scraps and embroidery thread.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Mrs. Ornie Tyson Davis from Ansonville, N. C., to N. C. S. Sanatorium, Col. Div., Sanatorium, N. C.

SILENT PRAYER

FAITH grasps the blessing she desires.
Hope points the upward gaze.
And Love, celestial Love, inspires
The eloquence of praise.

But sweeter far the still, small voice
Unheard by human ear,
When God has made the heart rejoice
And dried the bitter tear.

No accents flow, no words ascend,
All utterance faileth there,
But God Himself doth understand
And answer silent prayer.

—From the Universal Hymnal.

THOUGH all unrecognized in halls of fame,
Let this be said by those who speak my name:
"No mountain height she scaled on daring wings
But she was true and kind in little things."

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

AS HE THINKETH

THINK good and goodness shall belong
Within the temple of your heart;
Think joy and every robin's song
Shall be your spirit's counterpart;
Think peace and the exquisite swing
Of ordered stars shall steady you;
Think love and every living thing
In beauty shall be born anew.

Think Truth and the eternal law
Your never failing guide shall be;
Think life and every breath you draw
Shall add a prayer of ecstasy;
Think hope and buried seeds shall lift
Rich harvests from the willing sod;
Think praise and it shall be your gift
To share with men the grace of God.

—*Vivian Yeiser Laramore.*

LET nothing come between you and the light.
—*Thoreau.*

WHEN buying oranges, lemons and grapefruit, select those that are heavy as they contain more juice.

DETERMINATION is the stuff with which we make our dreams come true.

SOMETIMES there is more good in our apparent enemies than in our friends.

THE children of St. Andrew's Presbyterian mission, in Bermondsey (London), have taken the following pledge, with the intention of helping to keep their little bit of England better:

"I promise:

"Not to pull up plants by the roots and not to injure animals, trees, plants and flowers in and about Bermondsey;

"To do my best to sow seeds or plant trees and flowers at least once a year;

"Not to throw about broken crockery, tins, paper, or any other rubbish; and

"To do all I can to make Bermondsey healthful and beautiful."

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

MRS. H. A. STEVENS, Chairman, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.
MISS ETHEL L. HERSEY, Secretary, Hingham, Mass.
MISS EDITH L. JONES, Treasurer of Sunshine Funds, 65 Langdon Street, Cambridge, Mass.

ITS PURPOSE

To cheer and comfort those who are ill, lonely, or discouraged, through the exchange of letters and by gifts of books and magazines.

To help those who live far from schools, or who wish to continue their studies by means of correspondence with a teacher.

To give to those living far from church some of the helps which churches give. One good sermon or similar article is printed in each number. These sermons are never doctrinal, but present only such simple religious truths and principles as are agreed on by all churches.

WHERE TO WRITE

1. *Letters paying for subscriptions to the paper*, fifty cents a year, should be sent to the Cheerful Letter Exchange, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Checks or postal orders should be made payable to the Cheerful Letter Exchange.

2. *Letters asking for correspondents* should be sent to the Chairman, Mrs. J. A. McCaddin, 21 Ashfield St., Roslindale, Mass.

3. *Letters asking for help in studying at home* should be sent to Mrs. George O. Sands, Brimble Ave., North Beverly, Mass.

The Home Study Committee has on hand a variety of schoolbooks which may be used by students either at home or in the schoolroom. The aim of the teachers is to help in any study where help is needed. Often this may fit a person for a higher grade of work.

4. *Letters about the establishment of Circulating Libraries* should be sent to Mrs. Henry R. Bowser, 36 Lancaster St., Cambridge, Mass.

A Circulating Library will be started in any small community needing one, if proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references can be given. Two hundred and thirty-nine are now on our lists.

Letters asking for Bibles should be sent to Mrs. William B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

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